

Margaret and Andrew Kamarck, of Brewster, are the Conservationists of the Year for 2010, as selected by the Trustees of the Brewster Conservation Trust. Their son Tino recalls their love and work for all things Brewster:

In June of 1928, Emmanuel and Ann Goldenweiser brought their two children to Brewster for the first time, as they sought refuge from the summer heat of Washington, DC in those days before air conditioning. Their daughter, Margaret, was 10 years old that summer, and for the next 80 years, apart from occasional sojourns abroad, Margaret spent all summer, every summer in Brewster.

Dr. Goldenweiser bought and refurbished two cottages in the Brewster Park Community. When Margaret married Andrew Kamarck in 1941, they were given one of the cottages, and the growing Kamarck family continued the tradition of summers in Brewster.

Of course, Brewster was a much less populous, more bucolic town in those days but, in fact, a traveler along Main Street in the 1940's, '50's or '60's would not feel lost or disoriented in tracing that same route today. The immutable, graceful beauty of Brewster's sea captains' homes and leafy lanes, together with the eternal Flats and sea-girt sunsets were what drew Margie and Andy Kamarck to Brewster and kept them here. After three decades in the Washington, DC area and in the world arena, with busy lives raising a family, forging a professional legacy and helping to build a community, there was no question but that Margie and Andy would "retire" to their beloved Brewster.

The word "retire" must properly be inside quotation marks because, for the next 30+ years, Andy and Margie were busier than ever – working tirelessly to ensure that their physical, cultural and civic environments would be robust and sustainable. In between his meetings and his writings, Andy loved best to explore the Cape's hidden byways – finding new beach vistas, vernal pools and off-road trails. Margie, while she pursued her own artistic muse and served that role herself in sponsoring and encouraging other artists, tended her garden.

That phrase "tended her garden" requires some explication because it contains an emblem of Andy and Margie's involvement with the conservation of Brewster's low key natural splendors. Margie's mother was a world class gardener, spending each summer in assiduously tending the small, perfect array of flowers at her cottage. Margie's botanical knowledge was no less encyclopedic, but her relationship with nature was less domestic and more laissez-faire. In her slow, patient cultivation of the landscaping around their beloved hilltop home on Pine Ridge Road, Margie's half-joking principle was: "See what comes up and pull out what you don't want." This landscaping aesthetic exalted the natural and the naturalized and was the unrelenting enemy to the artificial and the invasive exotic. (Margie waged a lifelong war on Oriental Bittersweet – a crusade now carried on by her son).

The point is that Margie and Andy both loved and respected Brewster's natural character and wanted their home to fit seamlessly and unobtrusively into that environmental context. Not surprisingly, they were also early and strong supporters of the Town's conservation efforts and of the Brewster Conservation Trust. In particular, Andy, as an economist with a long-term perspective, appreciated that small, incremental purchases of strategically located parcels of undeveloped land would gradually but

ineluctably divert development into controlled channels and assure the maintenance of a critical mass of open space – all without disrupting the market.

Accordingly, Andy and Margie not only gave generously to BCT and encouraged friends and family to do the same, they also started – with their 50th wedding anniversary in 1991 – the salutary tradition in the Kamarck family to mark all significant celebratory occasions with a request for donations to BCT in lieu of gifts.

Margie passed away on Christmas Day, 2007, and Andy slipped away from us just this past March. But each of them, right up to the very end, continued to be appreciative of, and grateful for, Brewster's quiet, calm natural beauty that surrounded them, and they were concerned that BCT's important initiatives – such as the Quivett Marsh overlook – would continue to protect and preserve that beauty.

As each of them specifically and explicitly requested at every appropriate opportunity, the best and most enduring manner in which we can remember them and honor them is to continue to support the work and the goals of BCT and its sister organizations through The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc.

Tino Kamarck

Brewster MA

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